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The Association for Telecommunications Professionals in Higher Education

NEWS

Addressing
Voice, Data, and Video
Communications Needs
for Higher Education

March, 2002

Leadership Award to Honor Ruth Michalecki

At the February 3 meeting, ACUTA's Board of Directors voted to rename the ACUTA Leadership Award in honor of former ACUTA President Ruth Michalecki, who passed away in January.

This annual award, created just last year, honors an ACUTA member who demonstrates the qualities that Ruth epitomized throughout her career. The criteria for the award include contributing to the education, professional development, and mentoring of other professionals; innovation; and advancing telecommunications for the benefit of higher education.

The recipient of this award is also expected to have engaged in activities that have directly benefited ACUTA as well as the broader higher education community.

In a letter to Dr. Harvey Perlman, Chancellor of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln where Ruth served as Director of Telecom-

munications, ACUTA President Maureen Trimm expressed sympathy on behalf of the association. "We hope that this action conveys to you our sincere appreciation of Ruth, both as a wonderful and memorable person, and as an outstanding leader in the telecommunications profession.

Submit Nominations for Ruth A. Michalecki Leadership Award by May 10.

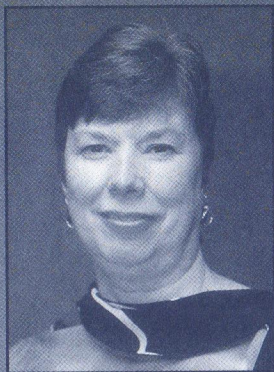
"ACUTA and its members owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Ruth for her efforts on behalf of the profession. In considering how we might thank Ruth and pay tribute to her memory in a lasting way, the ACUTA Board of Directors has decided to rename one of its most prestigious awards in her honor. Beginning this year, the ACUTA Leadership Award will be known

as the ACUTA Ruth A. Michalecki Leadership Award."

At the annual conference in Lake Buena Vista last year, Michael Palladino, University of Pennsylvania, was the sole recipient of the first annual Leadership Award. However, in any year there may be one winner, multiple winners, or, if no one meets the high standards identified with the award, no winner.

If you would like to nominate someone whom you feel meets the criteria, complete the nomination form online at www.acuta.org/forms/la.cfm or contact Lisa Cheshire at 859/278-3338 for a fax version.

Deadline for this year's nominations is May 10. Nominees must be from ACUTA member institutions, associate members, or corporate affiliates.



From the President

Maureen Trimm
Stanford University

Maureen D. Trimm

One of my mother's favorite sayings was "what goes around, comes around." Although she applied that to many aspects of her own life and in her child rearing, I remember hearing it mostly in terms of encouraging positive relationships with each person with whom one comes in contact. I'd like to extend that homily to apply to ACUTA volunteers.

This is the time of year when ACUTA seeks nominations for its volunteer leadership positions. Nominations Chair, Tony Tanzi, has sent out the call for individuals to run for several officer and Board member positions.

Why would anyone want to be on the ACUTA Board? Well, I can truly say that what one gives in terms of time and commitment to ACUTA comes back in many beneficial ways, both to the individual volunteer and to their college or university.

ACUTA volunteer leaders have the opportunity to provide strategic guidance to the

direction of their professional association. Working with a group of peerless peers, they develop and hone their skills in leadership, teamwork, strategic planning, fiduciary oversight, negotiation, and presenta-

Board Positions to Be Filled

- * President-Elect
- * Secretary/Treasurer
- * Two Directors-at-Large

Nominations must be received by 5:00 p.m. CDT, April 5, 2002.

Send all nominations to: Anthony Tanzi, RCDD, Exec. Dir., Comm. and Network Technology, Brown University, 115 Waterman St. Box 1885, Providence, RI 02912-1885, or email anthony_tanzi@brown.edu.

Sorry, phone nominations will not be accepted.

tion. They bring these experiences back to their jobs, as well as the technical insight gained in the many conversations held in both formal and informal Board meetings. Their network of colleagues is enriched by the relationships developed with other ACUTA leaders.

ACUTA's strength is that of the knowledge and contributions of its members. Every

member survey has indicated that "networking with peers" is the primary reason communication technologists join ACUTA. There are many opportunities for networking, from participation in the listserve to joining in audio, Web, or in-person seminars and conference sessions; volunteering to be a monitor or moderator of a conference session; participating as a panel member or a speaker in an event session; writing an article for the *ACUTA News* or the *ACUTA Journal*; and serving as a committee member or chair or as a member of the

ACUTA Board of Directors.

I strongly encourage every ACUTA member to find the level of participation that best suits their time and interests. The association will be stronger for that volunteerism, and the volunteer will gain from "what comes around."

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ACUTA EVENTS

Spring Seminars

April 28–May 1, 2002
Philadelphia, PA

Wyndham Franklin Plaza Hotel

31st Annual Conference

July 14–18, 2002
Reno/Lake Tahoe, NV
John Ascuaga's Nugget Hotel

Fall Seminars

October 20-23, 2002
Denver, CO
Marriott City Center

ACUTA members may read about the latest developments in telecommunications- and Internet-related issues in the most recent **Legislative and Regulatory Update**, an electronic newsletter pre-

ACUTA Elections to Go Online

This year, for the first time, ACUTA's board of directors will be elected electronically. In addition to saving the association hundreds of dollars in printing and postage costs, this move should make voting more convenient for ACUTA members and eliminate any possibility of the loss or delay in receiving ballots via the U.S. Mail.

"In examining the services that provided the best opportunities for cutting costs, we concluded that electronic balloting was a natural choice," says ACUTA Executive Director Jeri Semer. "We are a technology organization, our members are certainly technologically astute, and we have the

software and equipment capability. There just didn't seem to be any reason not to do this."

According to Membership Development Manager Kellie Bowman, complete instructions and all relevant information will be

urge all primary representatives to verify their e-mail addresses in our database," says Semer. Members can check our records online via the ACUTA homepage at www.acuta.org/resources/acutadatabaseservices/schoolsearch, and then look

Check your e-mail address in the ACUTA database:

www.acuta.org/resources/acutadatabaseservices/schoolsearch

sent to voting representatives the first week in May via e-mail. The outcome of the election will be announced June 10.

"Because we want every eligible voter to participate in the election, we strongly

for their name.

Every vote is important as we determine who our leaders for the coming year will be. If you have any questions, contact Kellie Bowman, Membership Development Manager, at 859/278-3338 x22.

ACUTA LEGISLATIVE & REGULATORY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Whitney L. Johnson

D C Update

Service Level Agreements

Companies providing equipment and services generally have a standard service level agreement (SLA) of their own that they prefer to have signed by the customer. The company representative may not be authorized to make changes on behalf of the customer. With frequent and rapid personnel changes that have an impact on service levels, the SLA can be a very important document. Telecommunications

member that the SLA that the company hands to you was written to protect the company. You need to get the necessary protection for the school built into the SLA that you sign, either on the SLA itself or in the form of an addendum or a letter from an authorized company representative.

'Enronitis' and Telecom

The SEC is looking for possible accounting irregularities in at least one bankrupt tele-

The need for such a spectrum became very clear on Sept. 11 when the wireless phone system became overloaded with frantic users. The FCC and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) analyzed a dozen bands of wireless spectrum and found no frequencies that could be made available for state and local public safety users. (TR 2/4)

The Department of Defense (DoD) then

pared monthly by Wiley, Rein & Fielding. Members may also access archived copies of back issues of this document at www.acuta.org/legislation/index.cfm.

ACUTA NEWS, Vol. 31, No. 3

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important document. *Telecom Manager's Voice Report* (VR 1/28/02) has an article entitled "How to Create an Effective SLA With Teeth" in which ACUTA past president Tony Mordosky, Rowan University, refers to the "very limited technical capability of the vendor's support staff."

Here are some of the things mentioned in the VR article and some of my suggestions regarding contract negotiations and sales meetings with vendor representatives:

1. A company executive who has bargaining power (not just the salesperson) must be present at all planning meetings.
2. The vendor should also bring the service manager and the technician who will be responsible for serving your campus throughout this project to the meetings.
3. The services to be provided must be fully and completely described, including schedules, deadlines, costs, user requirements, and more. This should include an understanding of who pays for fixing problems that develop.
4. Performance goals must be set and agreed upon. The vendor may indicate that the system as a whole will be up 99% of the time, but you may have a small part of your system that must be up and running at least 99.99% of the time. This must be in the agreement.
5. Be sure that the company gives you a current list of people to contact when problems come up. That list must escalate up to the top levels of the company, and they must keep you advised of changes.
6. Carefully study the company SLA with your institution's attorneys and, possibly, an attorney who specializes in the telecom business, and make changes to the SLA where it is in the interest of the school. Re-

com company, Global Crossing Ltd. "The disease that Wall Street calls 'Enronitis' has infected several companies in the telecom sector, generating fears that some large carriers engage in the same kinds of accounting practices that contributed to the collapse of energy trading giant Enron Corp.... Like others in the telecom industry, Global Crossing was swapping long-term bandwidth contracts known as indefensible rights of use (IRUs) for noncash compensation, such as equipment or capacity on another carrier's network." (*Telecommunications Reports* 2/11)

There are similar concerns under consideration about Qwest's accounting practices. It is interesting to note that Enron, Global Crossing, and Qwest all have been using the same auditing firm—Arthur Andersen LLD. (TR 2/11)

FCC 2003 Budget

President Bush's proposed budget for the next fiscal year has an increase of 13% for the FCC. The proposed budget totals about \$278 million, and of that about \$248 million will be coming from expected fee collections. Half of the increase is to be used for employee training and technology investments. The increase includes about \$9,765,000 to fund the expected employee retirement costs under the new rules that begin in FY 2003; \$8,190,000 for salary and benefit increases plus inflation and operating costs; and \$15,066,000 "for programmatic initiatives to improve agency processes and customer response." (TR 2/11)

Wireless bands for Public Safety

The FCC has been investigating possible bandwidth spectrum that could be designated for use only by public safety users.

indicated that it might be possible for them to share part of a DoD-controlled band with public safety users, but it would be on a "limited, coordinated basis." Hence the frequencies might not be available when they were needed in an emergency situation. (TR 2/11)

"Citing the importance of homeland security in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the FCC has designated 50 megahertz of additional spectrum in the 4.9 gigahertz band for public safety use," according to *Telecommunications Reports* (2/18). The FCC is seeking comments on rules and licensing relating to this spectrum. They will also be looking very carefully into who in the public safety sector should be allowed access to these frequencies with mobile phones and other technology.

Some member institutions have campus police that receive the 911 calls and respond to them.

USF Based on a Flat Rate

The FCC is also considering changes in the way Universal Service Fund (USF) fees are determined. The new method proposed in a further notice of proposed rulemaking adopted recently would be based on the number and capacity of connections the carriers provide to customers. Currently the fee is based on the end-user revenues from interstate and international telecom services. The notice asks parties to comment on steps that could be taken to ensure that carriers recover the cost of their contributions "fairly, accurately, and equitably from their customers." The hope is that this new method will be better for both carrier and customer. (TR 2/18)

Board Report

February

The ACUTA Board of Directors met via conference call on Thursday, February 7. Following are highlights of that meeting.

The Board agreed to charge several strategic direction analysis teams with developing concepts in support of the strategic planning process. The teams will report in April. In addition, there will be a one-day training session for the Board at the spring seminar regarding knowledge-based governance.

Secretary/Treasurer John Bradley reported that our investment portfolio is performing well relative to market performance. Development of the 2002-03 budget is underway and continues on schedule.

A change to the bylaws was approved that

will enable us to conduct elections via the Internet.

At the recommendation of Tony Tanzi, the Board recognized the numerous contributions of Ruth Michalecki by renaming the Leadership Award in her honor.

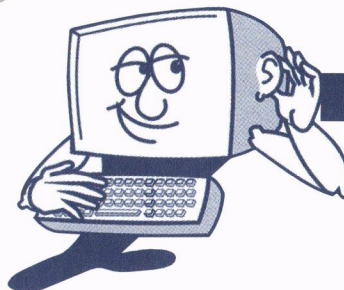
Planning is underway for the annual conference in Reno/Tahoe, and program development is on schedule.

In addition, reports were heard from the Web/Portal Advisory Committee, the Higher Education Advisory Panel, and the Executive Director.

Respectfully submitted,

John Bradley
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
ACUTA Secretary/Treasurer

Overheard on the Listserve



Patch panels vs. 110 connecting blocks

Amy Berg, Ball State University (aberg@gw.bsu.edu), recently asked a question of the listserve that may be of interest to many ACUTA members. "We are considering moving from 110 connecting blocks to 48-port patch panels. Our data networking group has already begun using patch panels. Has anyone done this for voice communication?"

Here are some of the replies she received:

Kevin Lint, The Art Institute of Chicago (klint@artic.edu): Here's our take on equipment closets/cross-connects: Telecom closets house all communications systems in a single (or group of) 19" relay racks. All station cabling is the same: Cat5E, RJ45, 568A wiring configuration for all voice and data outlets.

At the closet, voice terminates on rack-mounted, 110 panels and data terminates just below on rack-mounted patch panels. Video also terminates on rack-mounted panels of directional taps.

One group within IT determines wiring standards and maintains the cable plant. We like this system because everything is in one place in the closet—mounted in the rack. However, we can easily differentiate between voice, data, and video. If a voice outlet needs to be converted to data (or vice versa), this can be accomplished with a 110 to RJ45 patch cord. Because everything is in one rack, we can take advantage of wire management, and this patch

phone, but our LAN/WAN folks are staying with patch panels.

Our rationale for the 110 blocks is ease of troubleshooting and changing pairs when we are chasing a bad feeder pair or "possible" bad cable. This cannot be done easily if patch panels are used. We are currently using CAT5E cable, and are wired out 100M to the desktop for data.

In our new construction and renovation work we are looking at CAT6, but have not made that our new standard yet. We have a cabling standards document at <http://csintranet.csd.sc.edu/standards/A1010-8.htm>. This standards doc is based on EIA/TIA standards and is maintained by our planning group.

Grady Turner, Nebraska Wesleyan Univ. (pgt@nebrwesleyan.edu): A number of years ago, we used 110 blocks for both data and phone, at least for new installations. We had a change in directors and hired a new network manager. Our new standard is Lucent (Avaya) Gigaspeed patch panels for all data network wiring closets.

The 110 blocks on the data side were ripped out, and many were discarded. I salvaged some and have been using 110 blocks for new and upgrade phone work.

We have a new construction project that will begin this spring. I'm not sure it's practical for me to use patch panels for phone. Cost and flexibility were the reasons we originally standardized on 110 blocks. With

Part 5: Disaster Recovery Planning

Writing and Selling the Plan

by Geoffrey Tritsch and Robert Kuhn
Compass Consulting International, Inc.

Since we last met, you have, of course, gathered all the information on current spaces, systems, people, priorities, and procedures and are all ready to write your plan. (What? You haven't?) A disaster preparedness plan consists largely of organizing that information and making it readily accessible to yourself and your various teams.

Before you get to the "meat," there are some

plan is that it can conceal opportunities for cooperation. If your academic systems are not physically co-located with the administrative ones, then you have the opportunity for redundant sites by sharing both of the spaces for both functions. If spare systems (or systems capacity) are pooled between administrative and academic systems, you will be more resilient to incidents and have a more flexible set of response strategies than if the re-

organizational elements that it is best to state explicitly up-front. You need to define the place of the plan in the institution, i.e. set the scope by saying what is and is not covered and define the relationship to any more general business continuity planning for other institutional functions. For technology, you need to specify support for emergency services, public safety, public information, and so on.

Once your scope is defined, you can get down to business. One organizational principal comes from the NIST Contingency Planning Guide for Information Technology Systems: Think in terms of the phases you must go through after an incident.

First, you need to let the appropriate people know that an event has occurred (Notification/Activation Phase).

Next you need to get the priority systems running with what is available, which may mean temporary locations or facilities (Recovery Phase).

Finally, you need to restore to (a possibly new level of) normal operations (Reconstitution Phase).

The information you gathered is critical to each of these phases.

Another way of organizing the material is functionally: policies, procedures, people (internal and external), and systems (internal and external). This approach will only make sense for a highly integrated or converged operation. If your Telecom/IT operations are not unified, you may want to structure your plan primarily with sections for each unit: telecommunications, networking, administrative systems, academic systems, etc.

One disadvantage of this stovepipe structure applied to your disaster preparedness

sources are segregated. For a sample table of contents for a disaster response plan, e-mail us at info@compassconsulting.com.

The data-gathering process discussed last time amounts to turning over all your rocks and writing down what you find there. Inevitably there are going to be consequences. You are going to identify weak points where a simple loss could have disastrous consequences, e.g., data networks in a star topology, servers concentrated in a single location, all trunks in one cable. Either protecting those single points of failure or redesigning to create redundancy costs money without providing a concrete return on investment. So if you do nothing else, you must document those points so that you can address them later.

The reasons you prioritized services are not going to be comforting for those whose functions get assigned a lower priority. When the music stops, they may be without a chair. Better to fight those battles now than during a disaster.

A disaster plan is a major project involving both one-time and ongoing commitment of resources. Data gathering, consensus building, and writing the plan are going to take resources and require an executive champion. So you will have to sell your plan to executive management and get buy-in for political and financial support.

Next month in the final installment of this series, A Living Disaster Plan (not Living with a Disastrous Plan), we will discuss the ongoing commitments of disaster preparedness.

cord can be neatly installed (rather than having to be run between a relay rack and wall-mounted 110 panel).

I still like to have the voice cabling (particularly the riser) terminate on 110 panels because we still deliver some additional services over copper riser cabling —our campus card system is extended using an RS485 bus (3 pairs.)

Jim Curtis, Univ. of South Carolina (curtisj@gwm.sc.edu): Here at USC we are currently upgrading all the telecommunications closets to 110 blocks for the tele-

either '66 or 110 blocks, I can isolate single pairs for telephone use. In some cases, we have alarm wires and other non-telephone connections using telephone cable pairs.

Another good reason for using punch-down blocks is that it's much less likely that unauthorized persons will make changes. I'd hate to have people moving phone connections on their own. I do like RJ45 patch panels for data networks or VoIP telephony. For hard-wired connections, the 110 blocks are an excellent solution. It is also possible to use patch cables on 110, if you want or need to.



ACUTA Member Sites to See

For the first quarter of 2002 our topic was Hot News. The sites selected by the task force are

Columbia University

<http://www.ais.columbia.edu/ais/index.html>

Texas Tech University

<http://www.net.ttu.edu>

Congratulations to those whose efforts resulted in these fine sites.

For next quarter, our topic is **Web Based Directory Services**. The deadline for nominations is May 1, and selections will be announced June 3.



Jeri Semer, CAE
Executive Director

Deadline – May 1

Join the
**New-Member
RoundUp**
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\$25 Reward for
Each New Member
You Recruit!

www.acuta.org/join

From ACUTA Headquarters

Change in Store for Senior Leadership Forum

Beginning this summer, the popular ACUTA Senior Leadership Forum will become "The ACUTA Forum for Strategic Leadership in Communications Technology."

This name change more accurately reflects the content and focus for this event, which is to create a forum for the examination of strategic communications technology issues by those individuals who are responsible for planning and leadership of technology initiatives. We accomplish this task through the contributions of leading experts in technology and higher education, and equally importantly, through in-depth exchange between the participants regarding their experiences in the field.

The new title also makes it clear that this Forum is not a "generic" program about general management and leadership issues. Instead, it focuses on strategic issues in communications and technology. In addition, the name clearly conveys that this is a "Forum"—an opportunity for interaction and discussion among the participants.

So, what does the name change mean to you?

If you are facing the challenge of communicating the value of technology to important stakeholders, making decisions about major technology investments, deciding which technologies your institution will

adopt and support, deployment of human and financial resources, ensuring that communications technologies keep pace with the strategic goals of the institution, or similar issues, this program will help you find relevant answers.

This program is designed to benefit anyone with senior strategic planning and decision-making responsibility in these areas. This definitely includes ACUTA members at the Executive Director or Director level at institutions where these positions carry significant strategic management responsibilities.

ACUTA members who have attended together with their bosses or peers have also found the Forum to be a valuable opportunity for communication and collaboration. Individuals at the level of Chief Information Officer, Vice Provost, Vice President, and assistant or associate Vice Provost/Vice President have also found this to be a valuable program.

This year, the ACUTA Forum for Strategic Leadership in Communications Technology will focus on "Planning for Change: Strategies for Technology Investment." The Higher Education Advisory Panel is planning a program that addresses some of the top priority issues that many institutions are facing. These include:

- Identifying and communicating the value of investments in technology to stake-

holders including faculty, senior administration, Boards, and other key constituencies

- Planning and finding resources to implement the major network infrastructure upgrades that will be necessary to support administrative system upgrades, increased research activity, and the increased use of technology throughout the campus community
- Ensuring that technology investments are strategic
- Deciding which new technologies to embrace and support in the short and long term, and determining the impact of new technologies on students, classrooms, and networks

If you are responsible for guiding complex issues like those listed above on your campus, I hope you will consider the ACUTA Forum for Strategic Leadership in Communications Technology as an option when you plan your professional development activities for this year. Please check the ACUTA Web site over the next couple of months for more detailed program information, or feel free to contact me at 859/278-3338, ext. 25 or by e-mail at jsemer@acuta.org if you would like to discuss this program.

Jeri Semer

Welcome New Members

Associate Member

The Bolles School, Jacksonville, FL. Paul Sollee, 904/733-9292 www.bolles.org

Institutional Members

Crown College, St. Bonifacius, MN. Nathan Fritz, 952/446-4151. T1 www.crown.edu

La Roche College, Pittsburgh, PA. Lori A. Bible, 412/536-1234. T1 www.laroche.edu

Montgomery College, Rockville, MD. Nancy Nuell, 240/314-3000. T4 www.montgomerycollege.org

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Positions Available

Network Engineer, Seattle University, Seattle, WA.

Submit cover letter, resume, and names and phone numbers of three professional references to Seattle University, Office of Human Resources, Pos# 02010, 900 Broadway, Seattle, WA 98122-4340. Email: hr@seattleu.edu.

Director of Telecommunications, Smith College, Northampton, MA.

Submit cover letter and resume to: ITS, Smith College, 12 Stoddard Hall, Northampton, MA 01063. Information about Smith College and Information Technology Services is available at <http://www.smith.edu>. EOE

Network Specialist, Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY.

Send letter of application and resume to: Matthew Fuoco, Manager of Telecommunications, Computer Center, 010 McEwen Hall, 125 Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York 11549. AA/EOE

For complete descriptions of listings, we encourage you to access the ACUTA Web site at www.acuta.org. If you do not have Internet access, call Pat Scott, Communications Manager, 859/278-3338 x21 for more details.